

Carter chooses CIA nominee

From JANE ROSEN: New York, February 7

President Carter today nominated Admiral Stansfield Turner, Commander of NATO forces in southern Europe, to the post of Director of the CIA. The admiral was quickly summoned back from Italy last week and talked to the President at the White House on Thursday.

President Carter and Admiral Turner were contemporaries at the US Naval Academy at Annapolis from which they graduated in 1946. Admiral Turner at the head of the class. Later he was a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford and went on to the Harvard Business School. He worked his way up through the navy from captain of a minesweeper to commander of a carrier task force.

The President had promised to appoint someone outside the intelligence community and Admiral Turner meets that qualification. Whether he would pursue Mr Carter's stated objectives of reforming the CIA is not certain: his views will presumably emerge during Senate hearings.

As a military man he can expect the support of conservative Senators who objected to

the President's first choice, Mr Theodore Sorensen. Mr Sorensen withdrew last month under heavy pressure from Senate opponents who considered him too liberal and too independent for the CIA post.

At that time Mr Carter was widely criticised for "caving in" to conservative pressures and he has obviously learned from the experience. Last week when his nominee for Director of Arms Control, Mr Paul Warnke, ran into Senate criticism as "too dovish" the President sent down a firm message that he wanted Mr Warnke confirmed. Tomorrow the Senate Foreign Relations Committee is to start hearings on Mr Warnke's nomination and there is little doubt that it will approve him.

But there could be a heated debate about a tentative Warnke proposal that the US should make unilateral token arms cuts in order to see whether the Soviet Union would respond by making a similar gesture. Today the Senate minority leader, Mr Howard Baker of Tennessee, said he and other Republicans would oppose such cuts.